

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 BIB-01 HA-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08
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R 121846Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4197
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MADRID 03923

BRUSSELS ALSO FOR USEEC

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PINT, SP
SUBJECT: CATALAN COMMUNIST (PSUC) LEADERSHIP RESIGNS,
IS REELECTED; "CRISIS" APPEARS TO PASS, AT LEAST FOR NOW

REF: MADRID 3633; 77 MADRID 8598

1. SUMMARY: THE INTERNAL PSUC "CRISIS" BROUGHT ON BY
THE DECISION OF THE MARCH 31-APRIL 2 CONFERENCE TO
OPPOSE THE NATIONAL LEADERSHIP'S PROPOSAL TO DELETE
LENINISM FROM THE PCE STATUTES APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN
OVERCOME, AT LEAST FOR NOW. THE 116-MEMBER PSUC CENTRAL
COMMITTEE (CC) MET APRIL 8-10. IT RECEIVED THE
RESIGNATIONS OF PSUC PRESIDENT LOPEZ RAIMUNDO AND SECGEN
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GUTIERREZ (BOTH OF WHOM HAD VOTED WITH THE MINORITY
IN FAVOR OF THE DELETION OF LENINISM) AND THE REST
OF THE 26-MEMBER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, AND THEN, AFTER
CONSIDERABLE MANEUVERING BY CC FACTIONS, VOTED
OVERWHELMINGLY TO REELECT ALL 26 OF THEM.

2. THE OUTCOME IS BEING INTERPRETED HERE AS A

VICTORY FOR MORE HARD-LINE ELEMENTS WITHIN THE PSUC AND AS A SETBACK FOR CARRILLO, WHICH OF COURSE IT IS, ALTHOUGH IT HARDLY APPEARS TO BE A DISABLING ONE. THE "EUROCOMMUNISTS" IN THE PSUC CONTINUE TO BE IN CONTROL, AND LOPEZ RAIMUNDO AND GUTIERREZ APPEAR TO ENJOY CARRILLO'S CONFIDENCE. THE PCE IS NOW CERTAIN TO MAKE A VIRTUE OF NECESSITY, TAKING THE POSITION THAT THE CATALANS' OPPOSITION TO THE DELETION OF LENINISM DEMONSTRATES THE PARTY'S INTERNAL DEMOCRACY. MEANWHILE, ALMOST ALL OF THE REMAINING REGIONAL/PROVINCIAL CONFERENCES IN PREPARATION FOR THE APRIL 19-23 NATIONAL CONGRESS IN MADRID HAVE BEEN COMPLETED, WITH ALL THE MAJOR GROUPINGS (EXCEPT THE CATALANS) SUPPORTING CARRILLO ON THE LENINISM ISSUE. END SUMMARY.

3. THE PSUC CC MET APRIL 8-10 TO DECIDE HOW TO DEAL WITH THE DEBRIS LEFT BY THE EARLIER PSUC CONFERENCE'S REFUSAL TO ACQUIESCE IN CARRILLO'S INITIATIVE TO DELETE ANY REFERENCE TO LENINISM FROM THE PCE STATUTES (REFTEL). (THE MARCH 31-APRIL 2 PSUC CONFERENCE IN EFFECT REAFFIRMED ITS NOVEMBER 1977 CONGRESS'S DECISION TO RETAIN LENINISM IN ITS OWN STATUTES (REFTEL) AND INSTRUCTED ITS 267 DELEGATES TO THE NATIONAL PARTY CONGRESS IN MADRID TO VOTE AGAINST THE DELETION OF LENINISM FROM THE NATIONAL STATUTES.) AS PREDICTED, THE PSUC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EC) CONFIDENTIAL

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TENDERED ITS RESIGNATION TO THE CC APRIL 8, AND THIS KICKED OFF TWO DAYS OF TENSE DEBATE WITHIN THE COMMITTEE OVER WHETHER TO CHANGE THE LEADERSHIP, POSSIBLY CONVOKE A SPECIAL CONGRESS, OR RETURN THE INCUMBENTS TO THEIR POSITIONS.

4. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, MINORITY "RIGHT WING" CC ELEMENTS, THE SO-CALLED SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC OR "WHITE FLAG" (BANDERA BLANCA) FACTION, PRESSURED FOR A THOROUGHGOING SELF-CRITICISM ON THE PART OF THE EC AND ITS COMPLETE RENOVATION, SINCE IT HAD BEEN UNABLE TO DELIVER THE PSUC ON THE LENINISM QUESTION. BUT HARD-LINE CC ELEMENTS, THE SO-CALLED "LENINISTS" OR "HISTORICOS," TOGETHER WITH THE MAINSTREAM "EUROCOMMUNISTS," SUPPORTED SIMPLY RETURNING LOPEZ RAIMUNDO, GUTIERREZ, ET AL., TO THEIR EC POSITIONS. THIS MANEUVERING OBVIOUSLY REVOLVED AROUND THE LENINISM ISSUE, BUT WAS ALSO JUST ANOTHER INSTALLMENT IN A LONG-STANDING FEUD BETWEEN THE HARD-LINERS AND THE "WHITE FLAG" FACTION, IN WHOSE STRUGGLE THE ISSUE OF LENINISM HAS COME TO DEFINE ONE OF THE BATTLE LINES.

5. THE "WHITE FLAG" GROUP FINALLY LOST OUT WHEN IT WAS DECIDED BY THE CC MAJORITY TO VOTE INDIVIDUALLY ON THE RETURN OF EACH INCUMBENT EC MEMBER. LOPEZ RAIMUNDO REPORTEDLY WAS REELECTED WITH NO VOTES AGAINST AND ONLY 3 ABSTENTIONS, WHILE GUTIERREZ WAS REELECTED WITH ONE VOTE AGAINST AND 3 ABSTENTIONS. ALL OF THE REMAINING EC MEMBERS ALSO WERE RETURNED ALTHOUGH NONE OF THEM RECEIVED THE NEAR-UNANIMOUS BACKING GIVEN LOPEZ RAIMUNDO AND GUTIERREZ.

6. THE RESOLUTION APPROVED BY THE CC WEEKEND MEETING INSISTS THAT THERE IS NO CONTRADICTION BETWEEN PSUC'S SUPPORT FOR RETAINING LENINISM IN THE PCE STATUTES AND CONFIDENTIAL

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 MADRID 03923

BRUSSELS ALSO FOR USEEC

THE PROPOSAL BY THE NATIONAL LEADERSHIP TO DELETE IT, AND THIS HAS ELICITED SARDONIC COMMENTS FROM THE PRESS. THE RESOLUTION REFERS TO GUTIERREZ' OWN ASSERTION AT LAST NOVEMBER'S PSUC CONFERENCE THAT THERE IS NO FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE DEFINITION APPROVED BY THE PSUC FOR ITS OWN STATUTES ("MARXIST-LENINIST PARTY OF THE WORKING CLASS") AND THAT PROPOSED BY THE NATIONAL LEADERSHIP FOR THE PCE AS A WHOLE ("DEMOCRATIC, REVOLUTIONARY MARXIST PARTY").

7. AFTER THE MEETING, GUTIERREZ TOLD THE PRESS IT HAD RESULTED IN A REAFFIRMATION OF THE PSUC'S EURO-COMMUNISM AND OF THE FULL COINCIDENCE OF EUROCOMMUNIST VIEWS BETWEEN THE PSUC AND PCE, AS WELL AS A
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REITERATION OF THE NECESSITY OF MAINTAINING THE "FRATERNAL BONDS" WHICH LINK THE PSUC AND PCE. EVEN SO, HE ALSO ACKNOWLEDGED THE EXISTENCE OF "DIFFERENT INTERPRETATIONS" WITHIN THE PSUC OF THE APPROPRIATE POLITICAL LINE FOR THE PARTY, SOMETHING WHICH HE CONSIDERED "IRREVERSIBLE" AND "POSITIVE FOR THE PARTY."

8. MEANWHILE, MOST OF THE REST OF THE PCE'S REGIONAL/ PROVINCIAL PREPARATORY CONFERENCES FOR THE APRIL 19-23 NATIONAL CONGRESS CONCLUDED OVER THE WEEKEND, WITH ALL OF THE MAJOR GROUPINGS FALLING IN LINE BEHIND CARRILLO ON THE LENINISM QUESTION. THE CATALANS CONSEQUENTLY ARE LIKELY TO BE A RELATIVELY SMALL DISSENTING MINORITY IN THE VOTE ON THE DELETION OF LENINISM FROM THE PCE STATUTES.

9. COMMENT: PCE LAWYER JOSE MARIA MOHEDANO TOLD EMBOFF PRIVATELY THAT CARRILLO HAD STIRRED UP A HORNET'S NEST IN THE PSUC BY INSERTING HIMSELF IN A CONTINUING FACTIONAL STRUGGLE BETWEEN HARDDLINERS AND "SOCIAL DEMOCRATS." THE SUBSTANCE OF THE LENINISM ISSUE WAS LESS INVOLVED IN THE CONTROVERSY THAN WAS THE FACT OF THE FACTIONAL COMPETITION BETWEEN THE TWO GROUPS AND THE RESISTANCE OF THE PSUC GENERALLY TO DICTATES FROM MADRID AND CARRILLO. MOREOVER, MOHEDANO CONTINUED, CARRILLO SHOULD HAVE KNOWN THAT HE COULD NOT EXPECT THE PSUC LEADERSHIP TO EFFECTIVELY REVERSE THE DECISION TAKEN BY ITS OWN CONGRESS LAST NOVEMBER TO RETAIN LENINISM IN THE PSUC'S OWN STATUTES.

10. THIS SHOULD NOT OBSCURE THE FACT, HOWEVER, THAT THE PSUC'S DECISION ON LENINISM ALSO REFLECTS A CONTINUING DEBATE WITHIN THE CATALAN BRANCH OF THE

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PCE OVER COMMUNIST STRATEGY AND THE OPERATIONAL MEANING OF "EUROCOMMUNISM." SPECIFICALLY, THERE APPEARS TO BE A CURRENT, CENTERED WITHIN THE CATALAN WORKERS COMMISSIONS, WHICH INSISTS THAT THE PSUC BE A "VANGUARDIST" COMMUNIST PARTY BUILT AROUND AND SUPPORTING THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING CLASS, RATHER NARROWLY DEFINED. THIS TENDENCY OPPOSES THE "DILUTION" OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY'S IDENTIFICATION WITH AND SUPPORT OF THE WORKERS WHICH RESULTS FROM THE BROADER DEFINITION OF "WORKING CLASS" EMPLOYED BY CARRILLO AND OTHERS AND FROM THE PCE SECGEN'S COURTING OF THE POLITICAL CENTER AND EVEN RIGHT. WHILE THIS IS A MINORITY TENDENCY WITHIN THE PSUC -- AND WE NOTE THAT A SIMILAR CURRENT MANIFESTED ITSELF IN THE MADRID PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE -- IT OBVIOUSLY IS ONE WHICH THE LEADERSHIP TAKES SERIOUSLY INTO ACCOUNT.

11. WHAT WE HAVE THEN IN THE PSUC IS AN AGREEMENT TO CONTINUE TO DISAGREE, AND THE RECOGNITION BY GUTIERREZ THAT, AS MUCH AS HE MIGHT LIKE TO DELIVER THE UNQUESTIONING SUPPORT CARRILLO DESIRES, IT SIMPLY CANNOT BE DONE IN THE CATALAN PARTY; ALL IN ALL, QUITE A STATE OF AFFAIRS IN A COMMUNIST PARTY. THIS DOES NOT APPEAR TO CONSTITUTE ANY SERIOUS CHALLENGE TO CARRILLO AT THE COMING PCE CONGRESS. BUT, AS GUTIERREZ TOLD THE PRESS, EVEN HE VIEWS THE EXISTENCE OF THESE DIFFERENT POSITIONS WITHIN THE PARTY TO BE "IRREVERSIBLE." THE DEBATE WILL CONTINUE AT THE CONGRESS NEXT WEEK AND AFTERWARD AND, IF RECENT EVENTS ARE ANY GUIDE, A SURPRISINGLY LARGE PART OF IT WILL TAKE PLACE IN THE PUBLIC EYE. STABLER

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